

Canarese Konkani

Canarese Konkani is a minority language spoken by the Konkani people of Karnataka and in some parts of Kerala.^[note 5]^[1]

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Names

The Karnataka Saraswat dialects are referred to as Canara Konkani. The Kerala dialects are referred to as Travancore Konkani or Kerala Konkani. Certain dialects like the Canara Saraswat dialects of the Gaud Saraswats and Bhanaps are called आमचीगेलें *āmcigelē* (lit. ours) and the dialect of the Cochin Gaud Saraswats is called कोच्चिमांय *koccimāy* (lit. mother Cochin) by the members of those communities.

The word *Canara* is a Portuguese rendering of the word *Kannada*. The early Portuguese conquistadors referred to Konkani as *lingoa Canarim* as a reference to Canara.^[2]

Canarese Konkani	
कॅनराचें कोंकणी , Canarachem Konkani.	
Native to	India
Region	Karnataka, and in some parts of Kerala
Language family	Indo-European <div>▪ Indo-Iranian<div>▪ Indo-Aryan<div>▪ Southern Zone<div>▪ Marathi–Konkani<div>▪ Canarese Konkani</div></div></div></div></div>
Writing system	Devanagari (official), ^[note 1] Latin ^[note 2] Kannada, ^[note 2] Malayalam and Persian
Official status	
Recognised minority language in	Karnataka, Kerala
Regulated by	Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Academy, ^[note 3] Kerala Konkani Academy ^[note 4]
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	<i>None</i> (mis)
Glottolog	<i>None</i>

Geographic distribution

The dialect is mainly spoken as a minority language in the Indian States of Karnataka, and in some parts of Kerala and Maharashtra. The speakers are concentrated in the districts of Uttara Kannada district, Udupi and Dakshina Kannada in Karnataka.

History

Influx of Konkani speakers into Canara happened in three time-lines :

- Exodus between 1312 and 1327 when General Malik Kafur of the Delhi Sultans Alauddin Khalji and Muhammed bin Tughlaq destroyed Govepuri and the Kadambas
- Exodus subsequent to 1470 when the Bahamani kingdom captured Goa, and subsequently in 1492 by Sultan Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur
- Hindu exodus due to persecution and proselytisation of Hindus by Portuguese Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries subsequent to 1500
- Hindu exodus during the Inquisition ordered by St. Francis Xavier which was established in 1560 and abolished in 1812.



Distribution of native Canarese Konkani speakers in India

The people

According to the 1991 census of India, 40.1% Konkani speakers hail from the state of Karnataka. In Karnataka over 80% of them are from the coastal districts of North and South Canara, including Udupi. 3.6% of the Konkani speakers are from Kerala, and nearly half of them are from Ernakulam district.^[3]

Based on local language influence, Konkani speaking people are classified into three main regions:

North Canara (Uttara Kannada district, Karnataka)

This is the region north of the Gangolli river, starts from the Kali river of Karwar. The North Canarese are called *baḍgikār*^[note 6] (Northerners) or simply *baḍgi* in Konkani. North Canarese Konkani has more of Goan Konkani influence than Kannada influence compared to South Canarese Konkani. The major Konkani speaking communities include:^{[4][5]}

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ <u>Bhandaris</u> | ■ <u>Kharvis</u> |
| ■ <u>Chitrapur Saraswat</u> | ■ <u>Konkani Maratha</u> |
| ■ <u>Daivajna</u> | ■ <u>Shervegar</u> |
| ■ <u>Gabit</u> | ■ <u>Vani</u> |
| ■ <u>Gaud Saraswat</u> | |

Karwar Konkani is different from Mangalorean or south Kanara konkani. It is similar to Goan Konkani but mixed with marathi accented words. Although people of Karwar have their mother tongue as Konkani. A few are conversant in Marathi too.

South Canara (Udupi and Mangalore districts, Karnataka)

This is the region south of the Gangolli river. The South Canarese are called *ṭenkikār* ^[note 6] (Southerner) *tenkabagli* or simply *ṭenki* in Konkani. Rajapur Saraswat, Kudalkar, Daivajna, Kumbhar, Gaud Saraswats and Chitrapur Saraswats are some of the Konkani speaking communities of this region. 15% of Dakshina Kannada speaks Konkani.^[6] South Canara Saraswats, both Gaud Saraswat and Chitrapur Saraswat affectionately refer to their dialect as *āmcigelē* (Ours) This region has recently been bifurcated into Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts.

Konkani speakers in South Canara are trilingual; they are conversant in Konkani, Kannada and Tulu. Some of the towns in South Canara have separate Konkani names. Udupi is called *ūḍup* and Mangalore is called *kodiyāl* in Konkani.

Travancore (Cochin and Ernakulam district, Kerala)

Konkani speakers are found predominantly in the Cochin and Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kollam districts of Kerala, the erstwhile kingdom of Travancore. Kudumbis, Gaud Saraswats, Vaishya Vani of Cochin, and Daivajna are the major communities. The Konkani dialect of the Gaud Saraswats is affectionately referred to as *koccimāy* by members of that community.

The Gaud Saraswats of Cochin were part of the group of *sāṣṭikārs* who migrated from Goa during the Inquisition hence their dialect is, but for usage of certain Malayalam words, similar to the dialect spoken by Gaud Saraswats of South Canara.^[7]

Konkani speakers in this region are bilingual; they are conversant in Konkani as well as Malayalam.

Description

Konkani in Karnataka has been in contact with Kannada and Tulu, thus showing Dravidian influence on its syntax.^[8]

The phonetics, sounds, nasalization, grammar, syntax and in turn vocabulary obviously differs from Goan Konkani.^[8]

There was a small population of Konkani speakers in Canara even before the first exodus from Goa. This group was responsible for the Shravanabelagola inscription. There was a large scale migration of Konkani communities from Goa to the coastal districts of North Canara, South Canara and Udupi as also the Shimoga district of Malnad region. This migration, caused by the persecution of the Bahamani and Portuguese rulers, took place between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries. Most of these migrants were merchants, craftsmen and artisans. These migrants were either Hindus, Muslims or Christians and their linguistic practices were influenced by this factor also. Each dialect is influenced by its geographical antecedents.

There are subtle differences in the way that Konkani is spoken in different regions: “In Karwar and Ankola, they emphasize the syllables, and in Kumta-Honavar, they use consonants in abundance. The Konkani spoken by Nawayatis of Bhatkal incorporates Persian and Arabic words.”^[9] People of South Kanara do not distinguish between some nouns of Kannada and Konkani origin, and have developed a very business practical language. They sometimes add Tulu words also. It is but natural that Konkani has many social variations also because it is spoken by many communities such as Daivajna, Serugar, Mestri, Sutar, Gabeet, Kharvi, Samgar, Nawayati, etc.

Continuous inter action between the Konkani speaking communities with Dravidian Languages over a period of time has resulted in influences at the levels of morphology, syntax, vocabulary and larger semantic units such as proverbs and idioms.^[10] This phenomenon is illustrated by Nadkarni, Bernd Heine and Tanya Kuteva in their writings.

Many Kannada words such as *duḍḍu* (money), *baḍḍi* (stick) and *bāgilu* (door) have found permanent places in Canara Konkani. Konkani from Kerala has Malayalam words like sari/śeri (correct), etc.

Dialect Variation

Differences between North Canara, South Canara and Cochin Konkani

Phrase	North Canara	South Canara	Cochin
What happened?	kasal jālē	kasan jāllē	kasal jāllē
correct	samma	samma	sari/ śeri
We are coming	āmi yetāti	āmmi yettāti / yettāci	āmmi yettāci
Come here	hekkade/henga yo	hāngā yo	hāngā yo

From the above table we see that South Canara and Kerala Hindu dialects undergo doubling of consonants *āppaytā* (calls), *dzālē* (done), *kellē* (did), *vhaṇṇi* (sister in law) whereas North Canara Hindu dialects use the un-doubled ones *āpaytā*, *dzālē*, *kelē*, *vhaṇi*. The Gaud Saraswat and Kudumbi Kochi dialects uses *ca* and *ja* in place *tsa* and *dza* respectively.

Language structure

Konkani speakers in Karnataka, having interacted with Kannada speakers in North Canara, Kannada and Tulu speakers in South Canara and Malayalam speakers in Kerala, their dialects have been influenced by Kannada, Tulu and Malayalam. This has resulted in Dravidian influence on their syntax.^[8] According to the linguists, Konkani in Karnataka has undergone a process of *degenitivization*, and is moving towards *dativization* on the pattern of Dravidian languages. *Degenitivization* means the loss or replacement of the genitives, and *dativization* means replacement of the genitive in the donor language (i.e. Konkani) by the dative case marker in the recipient language (i.e. Kannada).^[8] E.g.:

- *rāmācē/-lē/-gelē kellelē kām.* ❌
- *rāmānē kellelē kām.* ✅

In the Goan dialects, both statements are grammatically correct. In the Karnataka dialects, only the second statement is grammatically correct.

In Karnataka Konkani present continuous tense is strikingly observable, which is not so prominent in Goan Konkani.^[11] Present indefinite of the auxiliary is fused with present participle of the primary verb, and the auxiliary is partially dropped.^[11] This difference became more prominent in dialects spoken in Karnataka, which came in contact with Dravidian languages, whereas Goan Konkani still retains the original form.

- In Goan Konkani "I eat", as well as "I am eating", translates to *hāṅv khātā*.
- In Kanara Konkani, "I eat" translates to *hāṅv khātā* and "I am eating" translates to *hāṅv khātoāsā* or *hāṅv khāter āsā*

Script

Early Konkani literature in Goa, Karnataka and Kerala has been found in the Nāgarī Script. **At present however, Konkani in the Devanagari script has been promulgated as an Official Language**^[note 7].

Literature

Early literature

Amongst the inscriptions at the foot of the colossal statue of Bahubali at Shravanabelagola in Karnataka are two lines reading thus:

श्रीबावुण्णजालें कज वियलें
श्रीगङ्गाजालें सुत्ताले कज वियलें

śrīcāvuṇḍarājē kara viyālē, śrīgaṅgārājē suddhālē
kara viyālē

[note 8]

The first line was inscribed circa 981 AD and the second line in 1016-17 AD.^[12] The language of these lines is Konkani according to Dr. S.B. Kulkarni (former head of Department of Marathi, Nagpur University) and Dr. Jose Pereira (former professor, Fordham University, US). Considering these arguments, these inscriptions at Sravanabelagola may be considered the earliest Konkani^[13] inscriptions in the Nāgarī script.

A piece of poetry attributed to the twelfth century and worded in Konkani runs as follows,

*jaṇē rasataḷavāntū matsyarūpē vēda āṇiyēlē. manuśivāka vāṇiyēlē. to saṁsārasāgara
tāraṇu. mōhō to rākho nārāyāṇu.*

1. The One who brought up the Vedas in the form of a fish from the bottom of the Oceans,
2. (and) gave it to Manu,
3. He shall deliver the world,
4. To me, He is the protector, Lord Narayan.^[13]

Medieval Literature

It can be said beyond doubt, that nothing has been written for a long period up to 1900 which is an awareness, is perceived in the case of Konkani. The wilderness may be attributed to the lack of consciousness, amongst the Konkani speaking people, as to the importance of the preservation of records^[4]

The earliest known Konkani epigraphy is the rock inscription at Shravanabelagola, Karnataka. Another writing of antiquity is a रायसपत्र *Rāyasapatra* (writ) By Srimad Sumatindra Tirtha swamiji to his disciples.

Goḍḍe Rāmāyaṇ

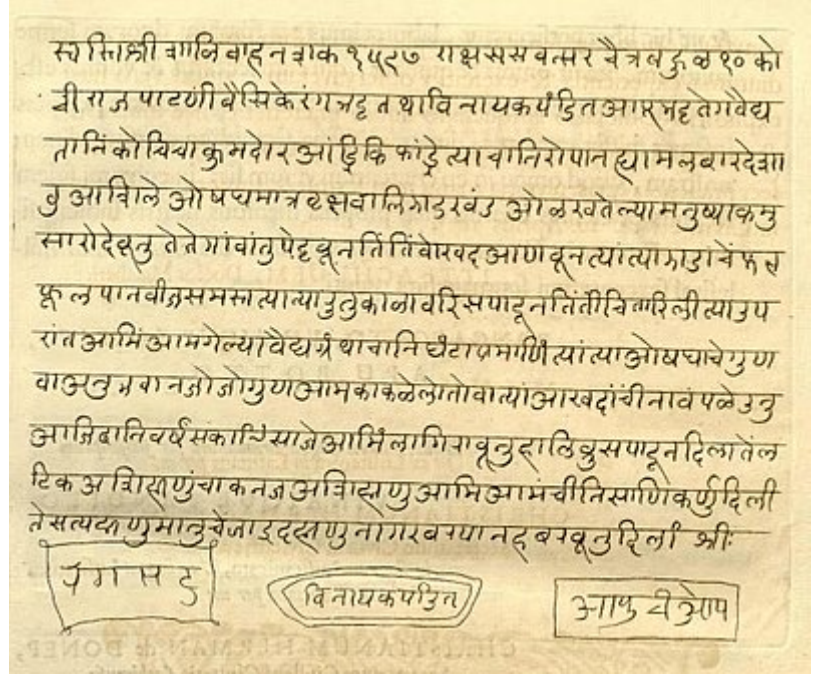
In Konkani, Ramayana narration is found in both verse and prose. The story has been told in full or part in folksongs of the Kudubis and ritualistic forms like *goḍḍe rāmāyaṇ* of Kochi, *sītā suddi* and *sītā kalyāṇa* of Northern Kerala/South Canara and the *rāmāyaṇa raṇmāḷe* of Cancon. Some other texts of Ramayana too are available in written form in Konkani. **rāmāyaṇācyo kāṇiyo**, ascribed to Krishnadas Shama is in 16th century prose. During 1930s Late Kamalammal wrote the *raghurāmāyaṇa* in *vhōvi*^[note 9] style verse. There have also been an adapted version by late Narahari Vittal Prabhu of Gokarn and recently, the translation of **rāmacaritrāmānasa** by Kochi Ananta Bhat of Kochi.^{[4][14]}

Hortus Malabaricus

Hortus Malabaricus (meaning Garden of Malabar) is a comprehensive treatise that deals with the medicinal properties of the flora in the Indian state of Kerala. Originally written in Latin, it was compiled over a period of nearly 30 years and published from Amsterdam during 1678–1693. The book was conceived by Hendrik van Rheede, who was the Governor of the Dutch administration in Kochi (formerly Cochin) at the time.

Though the book was the result of the indomitable will power of Hendrik Van Rheede, all the basic work and the original compilation of plant properties was done by three Konkani Physicians of Kochi, namely Ranga Bhat, Vināyaka Pandit and Appu Bhat.^[15] The three have themselves certified this in their joint certificate in Konkani, which appears as such at the start of the first volume of the book.

This book also contains the Konkani names of each plant, tree and creeper are also included throughout the book, in all 12 volumes, both in its descriptive parts and alongside their respective drawings. While the names are in Roman script in the descriptive part, the names alongside the diagrams are in original Nāgarī script itself, indicated as Bramanical characters.^[15]



Konkani in the Old Nagari Script

स्वस्ति श्री शालिवाहन शक १५२७ राक्षस संवत्सर चैत्र बह्व १० कोची
राज पाटणी वैसिके रंगभट्ट तथा विनायक पंडित आरभट्ट तेग वैद्य तानि
कोबिका कुमदोर आंष्टिकि फांटे त्याचानिरोपान ह्या मलबार देशातु आशिले
ओषधमात्र हसवालि भाट खंड ओळखतेल्या मनुष्यांक मुसारे देसतु
तेतेगांवांतु पेटून तिति बेरवद आणून त्या त्या भाटांचें फल फल पान वीज
समस्त त्या त्या पुतुकाबावरि संपादून तिति विवरिली त्या उपरांत आमि
आमगेल्या वैद्यग्रेषाच निरीरा प्रमणी त्या त्या ओषधांचे गुण वाअनुन्नरान
जोजो गुण आमकां कळेले तो वा त्या ओखदांची नावे एवेउतु आजि दोनि बर्थ
सकाळिं सजे आमि लागि रावून हो लिंबु संपादून दिला तें लटिक अत्रि
क्षुंकाक नज अत्रि क्षुं आमि आमची निराणि कर्णु दिली तें सत्य
क्षुं मानुचें जाइद क्षुं नागर बरपान हें बरवतु दिली श्री

The content matter of the Konkani certificate in Hortus Malabaricus with enhanced clarity, with modern-day spacing between words, and with the missing (inadvertantly omitted) notations added back for coherence

The Hortus Malabaricus Konkani Document corrected for contemporary grammar

The 17th century certificate was etched in the manner and style of those times, which may appear unfamiliar now. Further to this, some writing notations (mostly anuswara) are seen missing in the print. Hence, to make it easily readable, the body matter is reproduced herein with enhanced clarity, modern-day spacing between words, and with the missing notations added back, for the sake of coherence and comprehension.

Bhakti Movement

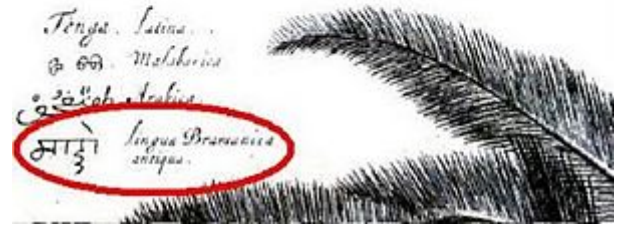
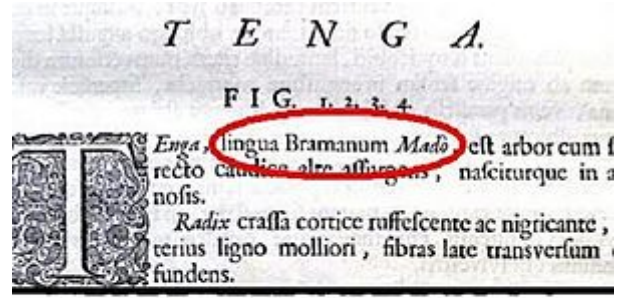
The Dvaita seer Madhavacharya converted Smartha Konkani Gaud Saraswats to Dvaitism. This Dvaita Gaud Saraswat community was instrumental in kīrtanasāhitya and haridāsasāhitya. Vasudev Prabhu was a very famous Konkani poet of the Bhakti Movement. He wrote many devotional songs in Konkani and also translated Kannada devotional poetry of Vyāsarāya, Naraharītirtha, Puranadaradāsa, Kanakadāsa. These Konkani songs were, later, sung by nārāyantīrtha^[16]

Contemporary Literature

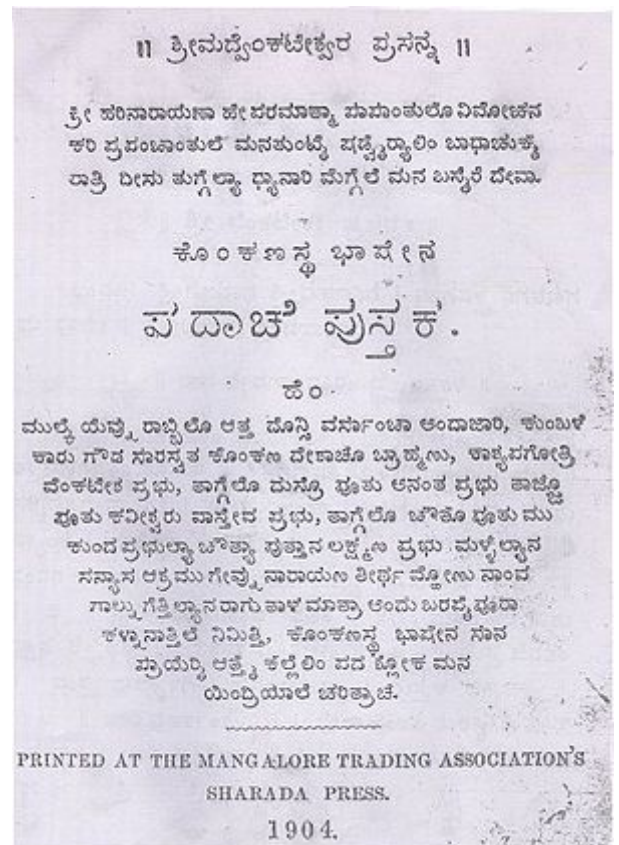
Contemporary Konkani literature in Kerala made a rather late entry, as compared to its other concentrated states like Karnataka. However, according to historical annals, there can be established no exact evidence to relate exactly when Konkani language and literature began its predominating journey in Kerala. But a possible contact and interlinking between Goa with Kerala cannot be thrown to the wind, as collaborators in foreign trade. G Kamalammal is known to have contributed whole-heartedly to Konkani literature, in the domain of devotional writing. V. Krishna Vadyar, Bhakta R Kanhangad, S. T Chandrakala, S Kamat are some of the most renowned novelists in the Konkani dialect. Moving further ahead, V Venkates, K Narayan Naik, N Prakash and others have penned forceful short stories; P G Kamath has contributed to the sphere of essay writing.

Some of the most great and legendary poets in Konkani literature from Kerala, comprise: K Anant Bhat, N Purushottam Mallya, R Gopal Prabhu, P N S Sivanand Shenoy, N N Anandan, R S Bhaskar etc. Translations, folklore, criticism also have enriched the Konkani literature in Kerala. Stepping aside a little bit and directing the attention towards analytic and detailed study, Konkani literature in Kerala has been legendary and celebrated to have formulated dictionaries and encyclopaedias in considerable numbers.

Culture, media and arts



KonkaniNames of Plants in the Hortus Malabaricus



This rare Konkani lithograph manuscript, dated 1904 was printed in Mangalore. It contains devotional songs in Konkani in the glory of popular Hindu deities.

Konkani speakers have retained their language and culture in Karnataka and Kerala. Music, theatre and periodicals keep these communities in touch with the language.

Notable periodicals are *pāṇchkadāyi*, *kodial khabar* and *sansakār bōdh*.

Konkani theatre made a rather late entry into the Indian art scenario. Konkani theatre groups like *rangakarmi kumbaḷe śrīnīvās bhaṭ pratiṣṭhān*, and *raṅgayōgi rāmānand cūryā vēdike* played an instrumental role in bringing Konkani theatre to the masses. *raṅgakarmi* Kumble Shrinivas Bhat, Late Hosad Babuti Naik, Late K. Balakrishna Pai (*kuḷḷāppu*), Sujeer Srinivas Rao (*cinna kāsaragōḍ*) and Vinod Gangolli are some noteworthy names. Ramananda Choorya was an eminent artist who encouraged people to develop Konkani theatre. He wrote the famous play *dōni ghaḍi hāssunu kāḍi*.

See also

- [Konkani language](#)
- [Konkani alphabets](#)
- [Konkani Language Agitation](#)
- [Konkani Phonology](#)
- [Konkani in the Roman script](#)
- [Konkani people](#)
- [Basti Vaman Shenoy](#)
- [World Konkani Hall Of Fame](#)
- [Vasudev V Shenoy](#)

Footnotes

1. Goa, Daman and Diu Act, 1987 section 1 subsection 2 clause (c) defines "Konkani language" as Konkani in Devanagari script, and section 3 subsection 1 promulgates Konkani to be the official language of the Union Territory.
2. The use of this script to write Konkani is not mandated by law in the states of Karnataka and Kerala. Nevertheless, its use is prevalent. Ref:- Where East looks West: success in English in Goa and on the Konkani Coast, By Dennis Kurzon p. 92
3. estd. by Govt. of Karnataka in 1994
4. estd. in 1980 by Govt. of Kerala
5. The Constitution Act 1992 (71st Amendment)
6. Term used by Konkani speaking Gaud Saraswats and Chitrapur Sarasawts
7. On 20 August 1992 Parliament of India by effecting the 78th amendment to the Constitution of India, Konkani in Devanagari script has been included in VIIIth Schedule of Constitution of India.
8. [Chavundaraya](#) was the military chief of the Ganga dynasty King Gangaraya. This inscription on the Bahubali statue draws attention to a Basadi (Jain Temple) initially built by him and then modified by Gangaraya in the 12th century CE Ref: S. Settar in Adiga (2006), p256
9. A *vhōvi* is song made of a collection two or three liner stanzas typically sung during weddings by ladies

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External links

- [Konkani Chavadi](https://www.facebook.com/konkani.chavadi) (<https://www.facebook.com/konkani.chavadi>)
- [Konkani Language And Cultural Foundation](http://www.vishwakonkani.org/) (<http://www.vishwakonkani.org/>)
- [Mangalorean.com](http://www.mangalorean.com/konkani/) (<http://www.mangalorean.com/konkani/>)
- [Konkani Friends](http://www.konkanifriends.com/) (<http://www.konkanifriends.com/>)
- [Save My Language](https://web.archive.org/web/20070112230100/http://www.savemylanguage.org/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070112230100/http://www.savemylanguage.org/>)
- [GSB Konkani](http://www.gsbkonkani.net/) (<http://www.gsbkonkani.net/>)
- [Kanara Saraswat Magazine](https://web.archive.org/web/20110203163046/http://www.kanarasaraswat.in/magazine.htm) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110203163046/http://www.kanarasaraswat.in/magazine.htm>)
- [Raknno](http://www.raknno.com/) (<http://www.raknno.com/>)
- [Learn GSB Konkani](http://www.ourkarnataka.com/learn_konkani/learn_konkani_main.htm) (http://www.ourkarnataka.com/learn_konkani/learn_konkani_main.htm)
- [Online Mangalorean Konkani Dictionary Project](https://web.archive.org/web/20110502055206/http://mangalorean.net/konkani/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110502055206/http://mangalorean.net/konkani/>)

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